DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 378 081 SO 024 288

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TITLE Art Education, Civilization and the 21st Century: A Researcher's Reflections on the National Endowment for the Arts' Report to Congress.
INSTITUTION National Art Education Association, Reston, Va.
PUB DATE Apr 88
NOTE 20p.; Paper presented at the National Art Education Association National Convention (Los Angeles, CA, April 10, 1988).
AVAILABLE FROM National Art Education Association, 1916 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1590.
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Art Education; Art Teachers; *Curriculum Development; Elementary Secondary Education; Futures (of Society); *Visual Arts

ABSTRACT

This document presents a portion of the report of the National Council on the Arts including one researcher's thoughts as he wrote the report, along with possible implications and ramifications for art education. Researched and written to characterize the state of U.S. arts education in 1988, the report concludes that arts education cannot be characterized as ever having been a national curriculum. Local control of the schools predominates and the degree of curricular autonomy varies greatly among the states. Each of the 50 states has a unique tradition of support for art in schools. To one degree or another, each state allocates a part of its statutory and regulatory authority to local school districts. In practice, most of the decisions regarding visual arts curricula are made by the 50,700 special art teachers and the approximately 576,378 classroom teachers whose responsibility it is to teach art in U.S. schools. The report mapped the world of art education both quantitatively and qualitatively. Because presenting a characterization of arts education through statistics, requirements, and mandates would provide no real information regarding the practice of arts education, the report presented a parallel account, a narrative or story of life in the arts classroom. After surveying the arts classrooms at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, the report concluded that U.S. arts education is characterized by imbalance, inconsistency, and inaccessibility. The report presents a strategy for the reformation of arts education with attention directed toward crises and the conditions for reformation. (DK)

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ART EDUCATION, CIVILIZATION AND THE 21ST CENTURY: A RESEARCHERS REFLECTIONS ON THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS REPORT TO CONGRESS

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ART EDUCATION, CIVILIZATION AND THE 21ST CENTURY: A RESEARCHER'S REFLECTIONS ON THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS' REPORT TO CONGRESS

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ONCE EVERY HUNDRED YEARS

Imagine being given the task of conducting research and writing a first draft for a Congressionally-mandated National Endowment for the arts' report characterizing the current state of Arts education in the United States. Imagine following those characterizations with recommendations for governmental policy in the areas of curriculum, assessment, research, teachers, and leadership. That is what Endowment Chairman Frank Hodsoll asked me to do in the summer of 1987. The task was to be completed between May and August. *It wasn't;* I gave up a trip to Europe, and finished my part by December. And I assure you that it *is* " a long, long while from May 'til December, " a time during which I felt that I carried the burden of all arts education on my shoulders, while critics from a variety of camps (some afraid of what would go into the report, and others concerned for what would not go into the report) were snapping at my heels.

In 1879-1880 when Isaac Clarke delivered the first Congressionally-mandated report on the status of arts education, his investigation was centered on one art — drawing, not the dance, creative writing, music, and theatre and drama of our current study. And by the time he submitted all the volumes of his final report, he had had four years to reflect and write; the country was much smaller; and the report was filed under his name. The study *Toward Civilization: A Report on Arts Education by the National Endowment for the Arts*, published in May 1988, carries the stamp of the Chairman of the Endowment, and it reflects the recommendations of an Advisory Committee, the administrative staff of the Endowment, and the National Council on the Arts. This researcher/writer, who is accustomed to speaking in his own voice, underwent severe difficulties as he adjusted to thinking and writing like an institution. My own voice is in the process of recovery. Consequently, today I would like not only to extract from the report some of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations that pertain specifically to art education, but I would also like to go beyond the report. As I compared education in the visual arts to that in the sister arts, I arrived at insights and reached conclusions that were inappropriate for inclusion in the report, conclusions that ideologically were not in keeping with the institutional voice, and conclusions that were tinged with personal bias. Today, like Isaac Clarke over one hundred years ago, I can speak in my own voice. Here is some of the report; here are some of my thoughts that surrounded it; and here are some of the possible implications and ramifications of the report for art education.

ARTS EDUCATION AND ART EDUCATION

The constellation of arts education contains some very different planets — music: the giant Saturn, seemingly self-satisfied, serene and stable; theatre/drama: Mars-like in its promise of school-life but now mainly secondary and extracurricular; dance: little more than a satellite of physical education and more exercise than art; creative writing: Venus-like in brightness and attractive to the public, but trapped in the hot gasses of language arts where the formulaic overpowers the poetic; and finally our own visual arts education: earthy, surrounded by a turbulent atmosphere, divided into disciplined new worlds and creative/expressive old ones (or is it the other way about?), with its nations always forming and breaking alliances, waging warfare, or spreading the rumors thereof. These planetary, practical, and political differences notwithstanding, this constellation called arts education does share a common place at the edge of our educational galaxy. The status of arts education and art education has never been high and may even have declined since Clarke's report of over 100 years ago when industrial drawing was seen to be in the national interest — the national economic interest. The cultural capital that we call civilization has always been seen to be of lesser worth than economic capital. The report requested by members of Congress may actually be indicative of the marginal position of arts education, and indicative also of the fact that we have a few friends in high places who are concerned about the current situation and want to improve conditions in the world of arts and art education.

So when members of Congress read the report, what will they learn about education in the visual arts? They will learn that art education in the United States cannot be characterized as one thing. There has never been a national curriculum, and local control of the schools is prized nearly as highly as the freedom of speech. The degree of curricular autonomy, however, varies greatly among the states. The department of education in Colorado, for example, is prohibited by state constitution from making any curricular prescription for local school districts, while the department of education in North Carolina has published over 800 pages of specific instructional outcomes for the arts that local school districts are mandated to achieve. (And with these poles-apart policies we do not know whether the classroom practice of art education

in Colorado is any different from that in North Carolina.) Each of the 50 states has a unique tradition of support for art in schools; to one degree or another, each state allocates a part of its statutory and regulatory authority to local school districts. In practice, most of the curricular decisions regarding visual arts curricula are made by the 50,700 special art teachers and the approximately 576,378 classroom teachers whose responsibility it is to teach art in the schools of the U.S. Of course art teaching in the U.S. reflects a *zeitgeist*, a spirit of a time, and perhaps it even exhibits a general national character. But general similarities notwithstanding, with such irregular and variable practices, art education is extremely difficult to characterize. So how did we do it?

QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE VIEWS OF ART EDUCATION

We mapped the world of art education in two ways, one quantitative and the other, qualitative. Let me first give you some of the statistical findings.

The Statistics

In our report we used data collected through the Fast Response Survey System of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement. The Fast Response Survey yields data representative of approximately 15,200 operating school districts in the United States, 75 percent of which have student enrollments of under 2,500 students. From the survey we were able to report:

• That between 1982 and 1987 the proportion of districts having graduation requirements specifically in the arts rose from 18 percent to 36 percent.

• That the number of seventh- and eighth-grade students enrolled in art classes is much lower than we might have expected. Only 53 percent of seventh- and eighth-grade students enroll in art classes (79 percent in the Northeast, and 35 percent in the West); 48 percent of the students take general music (81 percent in the Northeast and 21 percent in the West), and only 14 percent enroll in other arts courses.

• Twenty-one percent of the students in grades 9 and 10 take courses in the visual arts and 16 percent in grades 11 and 12.

• Only 26 percent of the elementary schools in the U.S. are served full-time by visual arts specialists, 32 percent are served part-time, and 42 percent are not served at all. In music, 45 percent of elementary schools are served full-time by specialists, 39 percent are served part-time, and only 16 percent are not served at all.

• For the visual arts, 67 percent of the districts with elementary schools reported having adopted curriculum guides that specify instructional goals in terms of student outcomes, 72 percent for the junior high level, and 74 percent for the senior high level. For music, three-fourths of the districts had guides for each level. For the other arts (dance, drama, and creative writing) 35 percent had adopted guides for the elementary level, 38 percent for the junior high level, and 50 percent for the senior high level.

• Almost no districts require competency tests in the arts for promotion from one grade to the next (4 to 7 percent of the districts reported that they did, and we have to wonder if they understood the question). Of course it is important to note that arts curricula and individual course content might still be

competency-based.

• Districts' use of a list of required or recommended textbooks for the visual arts ranged from 37 percent at the elementary level to 43 percent at the senior high level. For music just over half had text lists for the elementary and junior high levels. At the senior high level, 46 percent had text lists. For the other arts, the proportion having text lists ranged from 23 percent at the elementary level to 33 percent at the senior high level.

• About half the districts had curriculum coordinators for the visual arts (51-54 percent) and music (56 percent) at each level. But in the visual arts only 26 percent of the school districts have full-time coordinators. For the other arts, about one-third of the districts had coordinators, with percentages ranging from 30 percent at the elementary level to 38 percent at the senior high level (Center for Education Statistics Bulletin: CS 88-417, 1988, p. 23).

The Qualitative Picture

We knew that we could present our characterization of arts education through statistics, requirements, and mandates; and we also knew that the reader would still have no real information regarding the practice of arts education. Consequently we presented a parallel account — a narrative, a story of life in the arts classroom. Our original plan was to take one child — a composite child — and move him or her through our American system of arts schooling. We thought that by following this hypothetical student through the schools we would be able to convey information about the great variety of situations, conditions, teachers, practices, and policies that students encounter as they move from grade to grade and from school to school. We wanted to take him to different parts of the country, make her gifted, give him private lessons, take her on a trip to an art museum, have a visiting artist come to his classroom, describe her lessons with different types of teachers, place him within different social and economic groups; we wanted to describe the look, smell, and character of arts classrooms, arts programs, and the way in which the arts are situated within the total school curriculum.

We discovered that it would probably have taken us more time than we had for the entire report to paint this child's-eye-view of arts education alone. We did, however, manage to portray life in the art classrooms from our vantage point and also from the perspective of the teacher of art, and perhaps occasionally we might have managed even to convey a child's-eye-view of art education. Let me give you some examples.

The Kindergarten and the Elementary Grades. We characterized the child's life in art — the societal art education that the child receives before kindergarten. Then we illustrated what it is like to be in a Tennessee kindergarten that still reflects Froebel's garden of children who are nurtured through arts activities throughout the day. And we indicated that the "flowers" in Froebel's childgarden are becoming an endangered species. Reading readiness exercises and stacks of fill-in-the-blank worksheets send the signal to today's children that "real" learning has to do with words and numbers.

We pictured the life of a Pennsylvania elementary school art teacher who meets 28 classrooms of children a week and how amazingly successful she is in coordinating her lessons with all 28 classrooms, and how, through the coordination, much of the unique subject content of the visual arts is lost. Moving to rural Idaho, we illustrated how very little of any of the arts are taught when they are the sole responsibility of the classroom teacher, and when art *was* taught, that it was holiday art and handicraft. We went to the Delaware Valley to observe a program in which 700 parents and other interested adults carry reproductions of works of art to schools in three states. We were pleased that they cared, but concerned when it was reported that they were engaged in their

project either because art teachers did not wish to teach about works of art or were not prepared to do so. And in the inner-city, we observed children learning about the architecture of their neighborhood.

Children report that they enjoy art more than almost any other elementary school subject, but they don't think that art is very important (Wright, 1980). Perhaps the low esteem in which they hold art is conditioned by how little they learn about art as a subject and how much it seems to be mere recreation and entertainment. Perhaps the low esteem of art held by children is also related to the place of art in the elementary classroom. Seventy-four minutes is the average time that school districts claim to spend on art instruction in the lower elementary grades, but when the actual time spent by classroom teachers on art is clocked, it amounts to about one-half the allotted time (Wright, 1980). The squeezing off of art instruction becomes even more severe in the upper elementary grades. In the upper elementary school classrooms in which there are no visual arts specialists, the time devoted to all the arts (dance, music, theatre/drama, and the visual arts) is less than four percent of the school day.

The Middle School and Junior High School. We told how some art teachers struggle to achieve a balance between the creation of works of art and the study of the art of artists, while others make no attempt to do so. We noted that the junior high school art classroom was the place to coil a clay pot, paint a landscape in watercolor, draw a still life in charcoal, make a linoleum block relief print, and enamel copper jewelry, but that as few as four of 54 periods might be spent studying Impressionism, Post-Impressionism and little else of the artistic heritage.

The High School. We visited a magnet high school for the arts in Wisconsin in which highly interested and talented students receive a superb education in their special art, and we cited the concern voiced by some that these magnet schools may siphon off the students and the teachers who could enrich the arts programs in non-specialist high schools. We found one Minnesota high school that offered 104 courses related directly to the arts — offerings made possible because of a seven-period day (with the addition of three more co-curricular periods) and a school year divided into trimesters. At this school, as many as 40 percent of the student body might be enrolled in arts classes in a given trimester. We looked at the Advanced Placement courses and examinations in both studio and art history to determine if they might be models that merited general application in all high schools. And as I studied the situation that prevails in high schools across the country, I came to realize how little we think of a general education in the visual arts for all high school students. Through his recommendation (in 1987) for a one-semester required high school art history course, Secretary of Education, William Bennett may force us to confront the issue.

Conclusions. And when we were finished with our statistical survey and our series of vignettes of life in the arts classrooms of the nation, we concluded that arts education in America is characterized by *imbalance*, *inconsistency*, and *inaccessibility*. There is a curricular and instructional imbalance tilted in favor of the creation and performance of the arts rather than the study of the arts. There is inconsistency in the arts education that students receive in various parts of the country, in different school districts within states, in different schools within a single school district, and even within a single school. And because of the time pressures within the school day, comprehensive and sequential arts education is inaccessible except to very few students and then often only to those with talent or a special interest in art.

The report presents a strategy for the reformation of arts education in general. But the

report is also complex and subtle. It can be read for its direct recommendations as well as its implicit ones, for what it says and for what it does not say. It can be read quite differently by individuals who approach arts education from different perspectives. In the margin of this manuscript I have drawn a little picture of the elephant experienced by blind men. I have the National Endowment Chairman, Frank Hodsoll, with out-stretched arms to encompass the body, Warren Newman, Director of the Arts in Education program of the Endowment seated on the head, while I am swinging by the elephant's tail, all the while maintaining the vigilant eye that tail-swingers must. My two companions will have opportunities to present their conceptions of this elephant. Here are the things towards which I think we visual arts educators ought to direct our attention.

CRISES AND THE CONDITIONS FOR REFORMATION

This world of art education of ours is beset by stresses, some relating to internal factors and some to external ones. Much like the geological faults that lie below us, some internal stresses remain hidden as they build up pressures. As we cope with the daily business of teaching art, they are easy to ignore. Then there are the other stresses that are meteorological in nature. They have to do with the atmosphere — with the general societal, educational, and art environmental conditions that surround the world of art education.

Let us look first at one of the climatic conditions in which art education exists — the world of art. We are becoming increasingly aware that the aesthetic theories that we have used for nearly a century (those of Fry and Bell, of Croce and Collingwood, of Dewey, Beardsley, and Osborn) do not adequately deal with the art of the postmodern era (nor are they sufficiently sensitive to many attributes of art from the premodern era or from non-Western societies). These theories are not adequately responsive to art that is more than merely formal, sensory, and expressive. And in the world of art our understanding of the artist and how he or she develops is changing. No longer is there the strong belief that artists create themselves and art from scratch. The belief that the fuel of artistic development comes from deep down inside is subsiding along with the belief that self expression is the most precious by-product of art. In our postmodernist time, these beliefs collide with the beliefs of those who care little for aesthetic qualities and who see the presentation of social and political ideas as the essential role for art.

And when we look to the broader educational atmosphere that surrounds art education, we find that there is a new interest in subject matter and content. Finally, basic skills are now less often confused with basic subjects. There is a tiny but growing realization that school-based skill development has worthwhile educational value only when it is used to learn something. There is the growing realization that basic skills are best developed when they are employed in learning and understanding the basic content of the realms of knowledge that comprise our civilization — the arts, the humanities, and the sciences. There is the growing realization that education amounts to literacy in these realms.

Now that I have characterized some of the external atmospheric conditions that surround the world of art education, let me characterize

some of the internal conditions of our world that will assist or impede our progress as we attempt to improve art education. At this point I could be positive, point at the sunshine and say what a nice day it is, or I could cite statistics on the depletion of the ozone in our atmosphere and express concern for what that bright sunshine unscreened by an ozone layer will do to human skin in a few years time. I can point to the many good things about art education, or I can be pessimistic and point to problems. You can probably already guess the appoach that I plan to take. For the next few minutes let me point to a series of crises that we face.

The Crises in Art Curricula and Instructional Practices

Curriculum guide writing committees often resort to making collections of guides from other states or other school districts and from them, cobbling together "new" guides. It is ironic that we art educators who fear the establishment of anything resembling a national curriculum contribute to the continuation of what amounts to a *de facto* national curriculum copying. And what do those guidelines contain?

In our analysis we found that art curriculum guides usually listed goals relating to artistic creation, study of the cultural heritage, and critical responses to works of art. But when we looked at the contents of curriculum guides, we found that sometimes as much as 90 percent of the space was filled with objectives that sounded like this: "students will use a wide variety of lines in making line drawings"; "recognize thick, thin, long, short, straight, curved and zigzag lines. Draw a picture using a variety of lines. Create a work of art using a variety of lines with a variety of media"; and "use different kinds and qualities of lines (thick, thin, straight, curved, wavy, jagged, broken) in a nonobjective composition". The elements and principles of design that found their way into guides in the early part of the century are still there. These elements and principles formulated by Arthur Wesley Dow and others are thoroughly modernist in character. Unfortunately, they have reduced art to mere design and form. Even more unfortunately, they have often reduced visual arts instruction to trivial exercises in the designing of designs.

Our approach to art curriculum and instruction might be likened to knowing that in the world of art there are marvelous landscapes to be explored and understood — marvelous bodies of water, mysterious forests, fantastic rock forms. But, in effect, we say to our students, before you can run the rapids of this river you must study the composition of water, and when y a learn that it is H20 we will allow you to experience a few small streams and later perhaps some safe rivers. Our pedagogical strategy has been, in proper Pestalozzian fashion, to dissect art into its simplest possible formal elements and principles and to study them one at a time. Since the possibilities for studying these elemental components are endless, we seldom seem to get to the larger landscapes, let alone the world of art — at least in our curriculum planning.

It is not only that our chop-it-into-small-bits approach is educationally unsound, but it is all the other things that the chopping process destroys that should cause our greatest concern. The use of elements and principles draws attention away from the enormously important content of works of art — themes, subjects, symbols, styles, expressive characteristics, societal contexts, histories, meanings, and interpretations.

And, for a moment, I will return again to our curriculum guides. In them we found a serious omission. They seldom list the *primary* content of art education. The guides do not provide thoughtfully prepared lists of the works of art that students should know, interpret, and understand. They infrequently indicate the range of important works of art that should comprise the foundation of literacy in the visual arts. We have become so preoccupied with our debate about whether or not we should have

students study art in the manner of art historians, art critics, aestheticians, and artists that we have forgotten that these inquiry methods and those having to do with creative expression are only means, albeit important ones, by which students can be helped to understand art. These inquiry methods comprise aspects of the *secondary* content of art education. Of course we should have a disciplined art education (of one sort or another), but we need to shift some of our energies to an ongoing national debate regarding the specific works of art that comprise the canon or canons of literacy in the visual arts. Art does educate, or to be more specific, works of art educate. It is only when works of art are interpreted and understood by our students, that they can possess the special knowledge and insight unique to art education. But not all works of art have equivalent educational value. Different works of art teach very different things, and since our time for school art education is so limited, we need to consider the works that educate most fully. And, as we select the works of art upon which we focus our curricula, there are moral, ethical, and social, as well as aesthetic issues to be considered. We also need to engage in debate regarding the kinds of ideas, themes, subjects, and symbols that our students should be encouraged to express through their own works of art. The best answers will be found in the works of artists.

Too often today, the major decisions regarding the primary content of art education — works of art that our students will view — are left to a few publishers and a few authors. And, more importantly, even their decisions are dependent upon the easy availability of works of art, primarily by a few museums (such as the National Gallery of Art) whose generous policies regarding reproduction rights determine most of the works of art available for our students to study. We need to tell publishers what we want.

Finally, I must say a word about resource materials for the teaching of art. When the principal goal for art education was creative self-expression, all art teachers needed was paint, paper, and plaster. When works of art become the primary content of art education, we will need an enormous variety of resource materials relating to those works, their interpretations, and how they might be taught, taught about, and taught through. Currently there is a paucity of resource materials. In music education the story is quite different. In the study for the National Endowment, we reviewed the processes involved in the creation of the music texts used from kindergarten through grade eight — the years of writing, teams of authors, illustrators and editors, hundreds of special recordings, and millions of dollars in resources; and then we pointed out that most visual arts teachers are expected to organize similar teaching resource materials by themselves with little financial assistance after they have taught for a full day.

We also point to two areas of the art curriculum that receive special emphasis in *Toward Civilization* — the media arts (video and cinema) and the design arts, such as architecture and environmental planning. These arts have not found a secure place in the visual arts curricula. Once we decide whether the media arts belong in the language arts or visual arts programs and when we finally determine that it is very important to teach the design arts, we will need an enormous supply of instructional resource materials. And it is worth noting that our architect friends have demonstrated a special willingness to help prepare to teach the mother of the arts.

The bottom line in art education is what our students learn in their art classes. A decade ago, the National Assessment of Educational Progress in Art revealed that students who had taken five and six classes of secondary school art responded to some assessment tasks in the same manner as students who had taken no art. Progress in art, as defined by the National Assessment tasks, could generally be attributed to social and economic factors rather than to art

instruction. We have no recent data to tell us how students are currently progressing in art (it is one of the recommendations of the report that the National Assessment in Art be resumed).

We concluded that there is no comprehensive program for the systematic data-based assessment of student achievement or art program evaluation. There are, of course, unique problems in assessing art achievement and art programs. We do not have standard content, curricula, texts, and instructional resources. Moreover, the arts do not lend themselves to easily scoreable testing formats, and many art educators dispute the wisdom of formal testing and assessment. In our report, however, we conclude that the reformation of arts education will depend upon the development of systematic procedures for arts assessment and evaluation.

And how are we to accomplish this task? My suggestion is to avoid any testing of minutia, to conduct no testing of basic skills, at least not until after we have devised and administered holistic, comprehensive tasks that assess students' abilities to create and interpret works of art. In other words, evaluation in art should begin with one or two comprehensive tasks that will reveal a synthesis of students' achievement at the end of one year, three years, six years, or twelve years of art instruction.

Teachers of the Arts

We teachers of art in the U.S. have been educated as "artist-teachers." And, even if we didn't all consider ourselves to be artists, we still received our education in the art studio. Methods classes related to the teaching of the arts have placed an emphasis upon the productive rather than the scholarly dimensions of art instruction. Moreover, the vast majority of today's teachers received their own art education during the time when modernist thought and attitudes were at their peak. Creative expression was the touchstone, and creativity was best thought to be encouraged through the absence of rules and constraint. Abstraction and the formal elements of design took precedence over subject matter, symbol, and narrative. Technique and process were to be learned through individual experimentation, not from a study of the conventional and traditional practices of artists. Working in the mode or style of another artist was considered cheating. Art history was something quite unrelated to the making of art, to be tolerated at college, but not to be taught in the public schools.

Now we are asked to teach an art curriculum balanced among the inquiry methods of studio art, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics (the philosophy of art). Our education has not usually prepared us to teach this broadened curriculum. Although we may have entered the postmodern era, modernist attitudes toward creative expression still pervade the thinking and teaching of most art teachers and many of their teachers at colleges and universities.

There is, of course, the possibility that through staff development activities within states, institutes, school districts, and professional associations, teachers might learn to function in the new roles that have been proposed for them. That prospect, however, is not great. As I have already indicated, only 26 percent of the school districts in the nation have a full-time visual arts curriculum coordinator. Moreover, only about one fifth of the visual arts teachers belong to the national professional association. Consequently, the vast majority of art teachers have virtually no means by which to acquire direct profession-based information and assistance about the new roles that art teachers are supposed to assume.

Educational Leadership and the Structure of Arts Education

Although state legislatures, state boards of education, and local school districts have the statutory responsibility to establish the laws, regulations, policies, curriculum mandates, and standards that govern arts education, it has been the art educators themselves who, throughout

much of this century, have had to assume the major responsibility for advocating, justifying, and implementing art education programs. Thus, it is possible to see the full extent of the problem that art educators face if they wish to have a comprehensive and sequential art education as a central ongoing feature of the school curriculum. Educational leaders must lead the way, and as a group, they are not noted for their enlightened ideas regarding the role of art in society or in education.

But we must remember that schools reflect what society values, and that citizens who have the legal responsibility for schools — legislators, school board members, and school administrators — reflect the beliefs about art held within the society. If they consider art to be less important to future citizens' well-being and livelihood than science, social studies, basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic; or if art is considered little more than entertainment; or if art is seen as a collection of objects upon which an elite group can expend their excess wealth; or if art is promoted in schools primarily as an opportunity for creative self-expression, then art will probably not be able to gain a secure place in the curriculum.

Although they have frequently been alone in their battles within the educational establishment, arts educators have powerful allies outside the establishment. Arts advocacy organizations, trusts, and arts institutions, and passionately interested citizens form not only a strong lobby in support of arts education, but they sometimes undertake arts educational reform themselves. These efforts from outside the educational establishment, sometimes organized to subvert it, have little chance of succeeding unless they are adopted by the establishment. These external reform efforts tend to disappear with the termination of external money.

In the report we show the relationships among the various organizations within the structure of arts education. I gained special insights into the completeness with which the different sectors interacted within themselves and into how little the sectors — the federal, state, and local arts agencies and advocacy sector; the legal and statutory sectors of state legislatures, departments of education, state and local school boards; the professional associations sector; and the commercial and supply sector — interacted with one another for the common good of arts education. We conclude that if art education is to be strengthened, then it will require the leadership, support, cooperation, and coordination of each of the organizations within its structure. The report indicates that, as we undertake the process of reforming arts education, we must cease pointing to one or just a few factors that need correction. Each of us must stop pointing to our favorite culprit and putting all our bets on one panacea. It doesn't help much to say, "the teachers are the problem", or "the curriculum needs to be improved", or "if only administrators would ... ", "the federal government should ... ", "state boards of education must ..." "if only we had better advocacy", "we need more testing," "we must have better research". Yes, it is all of these things, and more, and all at once. In order to bring about change, state legislatures, school boards, and school administrators will have to work in cooperation with professional arts associations, teacher education institutions, and national, regional, state, and local arts organizations, advocacy groups, publishers of arts educational resource materials and commercial suppliers of arts educational materials. There is a symbiotic-like relationship among all of these associations and institutions that has gone largely unrecognized. Yet worthwhile change will occur only when there is a concerted effort among all of these components. In the report we have indicated the special role that the National Endowment for the Arts should play in mobilizing these organizations and agencies. If Congress supports the recommendations, it could signal a new era for arts education.

ART EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The report concludes that there is a major gap between the national stated commitment to arts education and the resources that are allocated for the conduct of art education in the schools. Part of this gap can be attributed to the lack of leadership and support at the federal level. For many years arts education has neither had an agency of federal government which served as our advocate nor one which supported comprehensive and basic arts programs in the schools; not the U.S. Department of Education or the National Endowment for the Arts. Arts education has fared far worse than either the humanities or the sciences. Some comparisons are useful. In fiscal year 1988, the budget for the National Endowment for the Arts was $167.7 million, of which $5.5 million, or less than 3.5 per cent, was allocated to the Arts in Education program. The National Science Foundation allocates $89.6 million, or 5.2 percent of its budget, to pre-college science education. While the National Endowment for the Humanities spends $17.9 million, or about 12.8 percent of its budget, in support of humanities education in the schools *(Toward Civilization*, 1988, p. 174-175). The fact that these figures are listed in the report should be taken as a sign that there is a new resolve and a new commitment to the arts in education from the National Council on the Arts and the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts.

In the report there is a call for (1) state education agencies and local school districts to identify the minimum amount of arts-related knowledge and skills that students should achieve; (2) a minimum of 15 percent of the school year to be devoted to the arts in elementary, middle, and secondary schools, and arts instruction for two full years in high school; (3) the reformation of arts curricula and a massive effort to develop instructional resource materials for the arts; (4) comprehensive evaluation of arts programs and student achievement in the arts at the state and school district levels, a resumption of the National Assessment of Educational Progress in art and music, and an extension of the Assessment to the other arts; (5) a strengthening of arts certification requirements especially for elementary classroom teachers and systematic staff development programs; (6) expanded research into all aspects of arts education; and (7) visionary leadership and a coordination of efforts among the sectors — government, education, arts, and business — that influence arts education.

In the report you will read of proposals for the establishment of panels and committees to undertake national discussions relating to the

development of (1) a consensus regarding the role of the arts in general education; (2) agreements regarding the essential and basic dimensions of arts knowledge, understanding, and skills that should be achieved by all students in the schools of America; (3) statements regarding the basic content of arts education; (4) guidelines and standards for the development of curriculum materials and resources in the arts, testing and assessment strategies, and methods of program evaluation and assessment; and (5) guidelines for the preparation of alternative varieties of arts instructional materials.

These recommendations for initiatives to be taken have already disturbed some members of the arts education community who believe that the federal government has no business looking into arts curricula, standards, and the evaluation of arts programs. I hold the opposite belief. Art education is not the sole property of us art educators. It is a national resource; itbelongs to the public; it belongs to students in schools. We should welcome a national discussion of what we are now doing, of what we should try to do, and of how successfully we reach the art educational goals that we *all* agree upon.

And what of the public reaction to the report? Since it is a quiet report that has no "media hook", since it doesn't cry that the nation is at aesthetic risk, since there are few catchy statistics, since it doesn't trash art teachers, since its criticisms of visual arts curricula are more gentle and restrained than mine have been today, since the report rests the blame for shortcomings in arts education as much with society and educational leadership as with our profession, the publication of *Toward Civilization* will focus national public attention on education in the arts for a few days at best. But in the longer term the report will provide us with the opportunity to initiate discussions relating to the purposes and prospects for art and arts education in the nation. The report contains a blueprint for the reformation of art and arts education. We should study its recommendations, and we should develop our own initiatives based upon them.

My professional career spans 33 years. And I view this as the most exciting, the most promising time. One reason that it is exciting is because our friends in government give indications that they care, that finally they have the same general concerns for the improvement of art education that we ourselves have. I think that they will try to help us as we try to help ourselves.

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